

E - 80,592
S - 116,601

AUG 2 1969

Soiled Chapter Of History

"Papers Indicate Japan Sought Peace Before U.S. Dropped Atom Bombs."

That was the headline of an article by Scripps-Howard staff writer R. H. Shackford, in the July 5, Rocky Mountain News. And that, precisely, is what revisionist historians, chief among whom was Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes until his recent death, have been saying and writing for more than twenty years.

The "papers" referred to are the just released U.S. State Department's 1945 diplomatic documents on the Far East (excluding China) which, like the writings of Dr. Barnes and other revisionists, have been the subject of a historical blackout imposed, not only by officialdom, but with the tacit consent and, often, willing assistance, of influential professors within the "educational" establishment. A pity that Harry Elmer Barnes could not have lived to witness the release of the papers and confirmation of his views.

(Parenthetically, it is probably fair to say that, possibly with the exception of the like treatment accorded the works of Ludwig von Mises, the famed Austrian economist now living in this country, never before have the person and works of such an eminent scholar as Dr. Barnes been subjected to such a protracted campaign of planned obscurity and calculated silence. An indication, merely a hint, of Barnes' prodigious writings and worth as a scholarly historian can be gained from the fact that just a listing of his works alone encompasses 42 pages in the book, "Learned Crusader — The New History in Action" (Ralph Myles Publisher, Inc., Colorado Springs, Colo.), the 884-page tribute to Barnes written by his friends, associates and former students.)

But to return to the Shackford article in the Rocky Mountain News.

Revealed by the just released papers, and adding more ammunition to the arsenal of the revisionist historians who have charged that it was not necessary to drop the atomic bomb on Japan to end the war; that it could have been ended even before the Russians came in against Japan, says Shackford, is the fact that, "Long before the atomic bomb was tested — let alone dropped on Hiroshima — the Japanese were trying to end World War II provided they could retain their emperor."

Revealed, also, says the author, is "... how the U.S. (government) concealed from the American people and the world a Japanese protest on the Hiroshima bombing which accused the U.S. of a 'new crime against humanity and civilization.'"

Other facts, charged by revisionist historians and now confirmed by the released papers, include, says Shackford:

That, long before the bombs were dropped on Japan, Japanese diplomats all over the world were trying to establish contacts to talk about peace — Pope Pius XII being the first to turn down a Japanese overture that he mediate — but that, due to a U. S. government "hang-up" on "unconditional surrender," all early peace feelers by the Japanese came to naught.

That, due to this "hang-up," U.S. authorities refused to talk, even informally, about peace throughout early 1945 until the Japanese agreed in advance to give up their emperor, and it was only after the bombs were dropped that U. S. officials realized that the Japanese would never surrender until assured they could keep the institution of their emperor.

That, ultimately, the U. S. gave in to the Japanese on this issue, and all subsequent events indicated that those who had insisted on "unconditional surrender" and that the emperor

That, particularly after the German surrender in the spring of 1945, Japanese diplomats and intelligence agents, in Sweden, in Switzerland, in Portugal and in other neutral countries, were frantically trying to establish peace contacts with the U.S. government, and that in mid-July, 1945 — before the Potsdam ultimatum to Japan — Per Jacobsson, of Sweden, reported to the late Allen Dulles, who later became CIA chief, that he was "personally convinced," after talks with Japanese diplomats, that "these approaches (for peace) are serious."

That an official protest from the Japanese government about the bombing of Hiroshima was delivered to the U.S. government a week after the event and that the State Department recommended that "no publicity whatever" be given it.

However, in spite of all this, now confirmed by the just released papers, wrote Scripps-Howard's Shackford, "... as late as December, 1945, four months after Japan's surrender, acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson categorically denied in a now-published letter to a congressman that the U. S. had received any 'official' Japanese peace offers earlier in the year."

These facts, added to the laboriously collected evidence, much of it also dug out by Harry Elmer Barnes, that our government, under FDR, actually badgered and maneuvered the Japanese into attacking an unwarned and unprepared Pearl Harbor, make up a soiled chapter for future history books.

We agree with author Shackford when he concluded, "These diplomatic papers revive many haunting questions and recall that Undersecretary of State Joseph C. Grew," who saw the insanity of U. S. policy and tried to change it, "wrote: 'If surrender could have been brought about in May, 1945, or even in June or July, before entrance of Soviet Russia into the war and the use of the atomic bomb, the world would have been the